

SUCCESS STORY

KOKONAO : ICE FACTORY INCREASES INCOME FOR FISHERMEN

Before the ice factory and cool storage was built Bugis traders purchased fish from native fishermen at a very low and unfair price.



A young boy sold his catch to the Cooperative Maria Bintang Laut

"Not only the fishermen from Kokonao, but also other villages in the close by areas, like Keakwa, Ipay, Amar, and Kavar have results from this ice factory as well. Long time ago fish was sold for 3000 rupiah to 5000 rupiah per kilo, but now the fish price reaches 9000 rupiah per kilogram. The amount of fish purchased from the Cooperative and transported to Timika two times per week is 800 to 1000 kgs. per trip"

Mr. Benny, Maria Bintang Laut Cooperative

Photo: AMARTA Staff

Recently in Kokonao, The Papua Agriculture Development Alliance (PADA) installed two new 60 KVA generator sets to supply power to the ice factory and the cool storage facility. This is an important addition to the Kokonao fishery program because the generators provide enough power, require less maintenance, and are more fuel efficient than the previous equipment. The diesel fuel for the ice factory is still being subsidized by PT. Freeport Indonesia as part of their inkind contribution to the PADA project. The fuel subsidy will be available until the end of the project in September 2009. The Maria Bintang Laut Cooperative continues to work with PADA consultants to determine appropriate prices for services in an effort to become completely sustainable.

The ice factory and cool storage facility continue to serve its function and give the Cooperative advantages over traders. Before the ice factory and cool storage was built Bugis traders purchased fish from native fishermen at a very low and unfair price. At the initiation of the Cooperative fish purchasing the price level for raw Barramundi from Bugis traders was Rp5,000 - 6,000 per kg. However, Maria Bintang Laut Cooperative was able to pay Rp8,000 per kg for Barramundi and Rp5,000 per kg for mixed fish. The traders have no other choice but to purchase fish at the new price level to retain their supply and remain in the seafood business. Consequently, the ice factory and cool storage facility enable the Cooperative to assist fishermen in receiving a fair price; Kokonao fishermen now receive approximately Rp2,500 (50%) more money for their catch.

Due to the new prices set by the Cooperative, seafood traders now move up and down the coast to different villages and buy fish directly from local fishermen. The traders are quite successful because even if they want to buy at lower prices they can do so because they pay with cash at the village. In addition, they literally save the fishermen's time, energy, and fuel that would otherwise be spent to transport their catch to the ice factory. As a result, fish supplied to the Cooperative is decreasing.

To respond to this new trend, work is underway to build an ice tank for the 5-ton boat previously provided by PADA to the Cooperative. Once completed, the ice tank will be installed inside the boat and a trial run will be conducted in an effort to allow the boat to periodically visit different villages along the coast so that the Cooperative can buy fish directly from the fishermen. This will help increase the supply of fish and help maintain the price set by the Cooperative.